

United States  
**Census  
2000**

**The Census Bureau is developing special materials to help religious leaders spread the word that answering the census is important for everyone.**

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U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

# Religious Leaders Lead the Way

*Religious leaders are influential spokespersons for Census 2000 — because they care about their communities and because their communities respect what they say.*

## Why Should Religious Leaders Care About Census 2000?

- *The census is how America knows what America needs.* The information gathered by Census 2000 will help you understand your community better. Many communities use census information to attract new business or plan for growth. In fact, many religious groups use the census numbers to plan new facilities and programs for their congregations. But if some segments of the population don't participate as much as others, those segments will be underrepresented.
- *The information collected by the census is an important tool for government decision-making.* The Constitution of the United States mandates a census every 10 years to determine how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. The census helps direct the distribution of billions of dollars in state and federal funding to areas that need them. These programs help children, the poor and the unemployed, as well as the elderly, people without housing and people with disabilities — people in your congregation and in your community.
- *The Census Bureau respects the confidentiality of people who answer the census.* By law, the Census Bureau cannot share the answers it receives with others, including welfare agencies, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Internal Revenue Service, courts, police and the military. Anyone who breaks this law can receive up to five years in prison and \$5,000 in fines. The law works — millions of questionnaires were processed during the 1990s without any breach of trust.

## How Can Religious Leaders Help Motivate Participation in Census 2000?

- *Help us explain why taking part in the census is important for everyone,* by making announcements in your bulletins and newsletters — and even your religious services. Brochures and sample announcements will be available for your use.
- *Increase awareness in your congregation and community,* by reminding your congregation about key census activities.
- *Spread the word about Census 2000 jobs.* Hiring from the community is an important part of Census 2000's strategy for success. Post information about jobs and tell applicants to call **1-888-325-7733** for more information.

**An Equal Opportunity Employer**  
U.S. Census Bureau



## Encourage people in your congregation and community to fill out their census forms and mail them back as quickly as possible.

For additional information about Census 2000, visit the Census Bureau's Internet site at <http://www.census.gov> or call one of our Regional Census Centers across the country:

Atlanta 404-331-0573  
Boston 617-424-4977  
Charlotte 704-344-6624  
Chicago 312-353-9759  
Dallas 214-655-3060  
Denver 303-231-5029  
Detroit 248-967-9524  
Kansas City 816-801-2020  
Los Angeles 818-904-6522  
New York City 212-620-7702  
or 212-620-7703  
Philadelphia 215-597-8312  
Seattle 206-553-5882

- *Encourage people in your congregation to volunteer for census activities*, including preparing job seekers to take census tests and staffing Questionnaire Assistance Centers — places where people can get help filling out the forms. To ensure that everyone is included in Census 2000, the Census Bureau will make additional forms available in Spanish and other languages.
- *Provide space for Census 2000 activities*. If you have space available, let the Census Bureau use it to test applicants or train new recruits. We're also looking for space for Questionnaire Assistance Centers.
- *Contact your city's or county's Census 2000 Complete Count Committee* and find out how you can become involved in local activities organized to promote the census. Call the Regional Census Center listed below for more information. If your area has not yet formed a Complete Count Committee, urge your highest elected official to do so!

## When Will Census 2000 Need Help From Religious Leaders?

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| 1998–1999        | Help us spread the word that answering the census is important and safe — and that job opportunities are opening up.   |
| January 2000     | Look for additional materials — developed especially for you — that will help you plan your census activities over the next few months, including a brochure and suggested announcements for your religious services, newsletters and bulletins. |
| March–April 2000 | Encourage people in your congregation and community to fill out their census forms and mail them back as quickly as possible.  |
| May 2000         | Encourage people to cooperate with the census workers who will be visiting homes that did not mail back their questionnaires.  |